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ABSTRACT

A three-month summary of the production and programing activities of the Children's Television Workshop, producer of Sesame Street and The Electric Company, is presented. Special programing for the mentally retarded and for ethnic groups, ongoing research efforts, and community support activities are summarized. Projected budget figures from October 1, 1975 to June 30, 1976 and news stories from 11 newspapers are included. (NR)

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Children's Television Workshop

One Lincoln Plaza / New York, N.Y. 10023 / 212 595-3456

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TITLE:	QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT
SUBMITTED TO:	OFFICE OF EDUCATION, BUREAU OF RESEARCH #R080475F
GRANT NUMBER:	GOO-75-00078
PERIOD:	October 1, 1975 to December 31, 1975
NAME OF INSTITUTION:	Children's Television Workshop One Lincoln Plaza New York, NY 10023 (212) 595-3456
PROJECT DIRECTOR:	Mrs. Joan Ganz Cooney

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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SESAME STREET RESEARCH

MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Researchers continued work on the Sesame Street Curriculum Renorming Study. This study, currently in the testing stage, was designed to measure present competence levels of the Sesame Street target audience with the Sesame Street curriculum. The following stages of the study were completed during the October-December quarter of 1975:

1. UNCO Corporation of Washington, D.C., completed pretesting program with sample test items. Pretest report completed and submitted.

2. Sesame Street researchers met with UNCO staff to select items for final version of the test.

3. Revisions of test items and artwork were completed; test was printed.

4. Sesame Street researcher Emily Findlay designed a coded data sheet for teachers to use in the administration of test items.

5. Sesame Street researchers traveled to Washington, D.C., to attend a tester training seminar and to discuss data treatments with UNCO staff.

6. Test administration begun; at the time of this report, it was about half completed.

This study will be completed during the first quarter of 1976.

Sesame Street researchers designed and completed a program of formative testing of program segments taped in New Mexico. These segments were designed to give a fresh look to the program and to focus on the emotions involved in entering social groups. An attempt was also made to present a distinctive culture, different from Sesame Street's usual inner-city culture, in a positive light. Researchers performed testing to investigate children's attention to and comprehension of these pieces.

Researchers worked intensively with Barbara Kolucki, a student of Dr. Abraham Tannenbaum of the Special Education Department, Teachers College, Columbia University. Ms. Kolucki is under contract with the Children's Television Workshop to develop a taxonomy of educational objectives and television treatments which will help researchers to order and evaluate existing and new Sesame Street segments for their usefulness to mentally retarded children. The taxonomy has been developed and is now being revised and refined.

Researchers compiled data to amend the Sesame Street Pictureable Word List. This document informs book editors, magazine feature creators, and others, how children characteristically label pictures of familiar items. It is important to know, for example, that in a feature meant to teach the letter H, that most children will not spontaneously label a picture of a horse as a "Doggy."

The pictureable word list was amended with test results obtained from child testing pictures of items representing 130 simple words.

A new staff of student interns was interviewed and selected for the Spring semester, 1976. The students, affiliated with colleges and universities in New York and New Jersey, will receive training in formative research practices and methods, and will also be awarded academic credit by their host institutions.

Sesame Street researchers assembled a panel of experts to review segments which have thus far been produced in the format of the Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation's Play to Grow activities. These segments model simple physical activities for mentally retarded children to practice with parents, teachers, siblings, or peers. The segments, each introduced by a distinctive logo, are scheduled for presentation during the first twenty minutes of each Wednesday Sesame Street program.

These segments were reviewed by Mr. Herbert Kramer and Ms. Jean Smith of the Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation, by Mrs. Bebe Bernstein, Director of the New York City CRMD Program, Dr. Brickner of the University of Miami. These meetings yielded production guidelines and additional Writers Notebook suggestions for producers to use in preparing materials in the future.

Researchers continued the ongoing process of review which is applied to scripts, animation storyboards, and the production videotaping process.

Researchers assembled data regarding a class of segments referred to as the "George's Farm" format. Producers were advised regarding the workability of this format in the past, and a recommendation to produce further such segments was offered.

Researchers met with Dr. Gerald Lesser, Head of CTW's Research Advisory Committee, and with Jon Stone, Executive Producer of Sesame Street, to discuss curriculum additions and revisions for Sesame Street's eighth broadcast season.

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

October 3, 1975: Sesame Street researchers presented a seminar wherein Dr. Ken O'Bryan and Tim Hodapp, researchers from the Ontario Institute of Education, discussed results of their eye-movement research on Sesame Street problem-solving and classification segments.

October 7, 1975: A researcher discussed formative research methods with a guest researcher from India.

October 7, 1975: A researcher met with Leslie Halliwell, Head of Granada TV, one of the independent broadcasters in Britain.

October 14, 1975: Mr. Kale, guest researcher from India, accompanied Sesame Street Researchers to a research site to observe testing methods.

October 16, 1975: Meeting between researchers and Dr. Charles Steinberg of Hunter College, to discuss the Sesame Street research internship program.

October 17, 1975: Associate Director of Research visited Dr. Robert Liebert of Stony Brook University to explore new research methods and ongoing projects.

Sesame Street researchers discussed projects with several student and faculty visitors representing various academic institutions.

November 6, 1975: A Sesame Street researcher gave a presentation before an Education seminar at Stony Brook University.

November 20, 1975: Associate Director met with Dr. Tony Bates, Director of London's Open University.

November 20, 1975: Associate Director met with Ms. Diana Bander, producer of a Brooklyn College Television special about learning disabilities.

December 4, 1975: Sesame Street researchers met with a panel of experts in special education to review newly-produced Sesame Street segments for mentally retarded children.

Associate Director made a trip through New England to discuss research methods and studies with:

1. Dr. Glen Brickman, Motive Research Laboratory, Providence, Rhode Island
2. Dr. Aimee Leifer and Ms. Barbara Flagg, Harvard Center for the Study of Education in Television
3. Dr. Dan Anderson, Dr. Jennings Bryant, and Dr. Bernadette Nelson-Shapiro of the University of Massachusetts
4. Dr. Robert Krull, Rensallaer Polytechnic Institute, and Dr. James Watt, University of Connecticut

OTHER ACTIVITIES

International: Associate Director screened segments from Sesamestrasse.

Products Division: Product testing and/or review was provided for the following items:

1. Oscar Card Game
2. Four coloring books
3. Memory Game
4. Pop-Up Books (Where's Cookie Monster, Sesame Street Mother Goose)
5. Bookmobile books
6. Friends Industries Sesame Street crafts
7. Milton Bradley Puzzles

8. Floor puzzles

9. Big Bird Jack-In-the-Box

10. Institutional Division filmstrips

11. Sesame Street Fair Game

As in the past, ongoing research was continued on the Sesame Street Magazine.

Community Education Services: Researchers helped to create guidelines for producing the CES Sesame Street Activities Manual. Researchers continued to review Sesame Street Program Highlights.

STAFF UTILIZATION

Ms. LaMarian Hayes was promoted to Assistant Director, Sesame Street Research

FUTURE ACTIVITIES PLANNED

1. Further curriculum development for Sesame Street's eighth broadcast season

2. Completion of Sesame Street Curriculum Renorming Study.

3. Completion and application of Barbara Kolucki's taxonomy.

4. Formative research on selected new Sesame Street segments produced for the seventh broadcast season.

5. Formative research designed to investigate the effectiveness of existing Sesame Street segments with mentally retarded children. Characteristic format will be examined for their ability to elicit attention and comprehension from mentally retarded children.

SESAME STREET PRODUCTION

MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The quarterly period of September through December 31, 1975, was spent in the writing of scripts, casting, and the preparation of all productions elements for the second half (January-March) of the Sesame Street taping season.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES PLANNED

During April, remote taping of five Sesame Street shows will take place in Louisiana in preparation for next season.

THE ELECTRIC COMPANY RESEARCH

MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The completion of a study of responses of preschoolers to The Electric Company A final report is due on January, 1976. The continuation of a project to do a content analysis of all The Electric Company segments. Also the continuation of a project to investigate possibilities for teacher intervention to enhance the classroom effectiveness of The Electric Company.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AND FINDINGS

The initiation of an Eye-Movement research program in conjunction with Harvar University. Initial projects to be conducted by The Electric Company including an evaluation of responses of preschoolers to The Electric Company and an evaluati of the visual responses of poor readers to The Electric Company with and without introduction of a "learning set" prior to viewing.

The continuation of a Pre-school Transition Study. The data is being collected and analyzed. A final report will be completed by January, 1976.

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

A formal presentation of all eye-movement findings was prepared for delivery in January of 1976.

An article entitled, "A Suggested Research Strategy" was published in the Journal of Communication,(1975) Vol. 25, No. 14.

A member of The Electric Company Research Division served as guest lecturer at Teachers College, Columb University, on the topic of research in children's television.

A special presentation was made by The Electric Company Research Division to Swedish delegates from National Television on the CTW model of Research.

A member of The Electric Company Division sat in at the oral defense of an OISE Student who completed a dissertation on The Electric Company.

A proposal to explore the use of foreign language co-productions for the teaching of foreign languages in the U.S. was developed with Middlebury College.

A member of The Electric Company Research Division presented a paper on directions in children's television at the National Association for the Education of Young Children in Dallas, Texas on November, 1975.

An interview was given to Newsweek magazine on The Electric Company.

The development of The Electric Company and its research was presented to Jennie McKenzie, Director of Research, for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation during this period.

The proposal for the Spanish language version of The Electric Company for possible co-production has been reworked during this period.

DATA COLLECTION

A three-phased study of childrens' responses to the humor on The Electric Company program was conducted.

An investigation of the appeal of characters and formats used on The Electric Company is now in progress.

Field testing of new animation techniques for The Electric Company is also underway. Post-hoc data on reading achievement has been initiated in Alcoa, Tenn.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Electric Company Research Department has participated in the development of filmstrips by CTW and Guidance Associates for kindergarten through 3rd grade.

A systematic schedule for research production interaction in connection with The Electric Company magazine has been started.

Plans for the development for bilingual in-school materials based on both Sesame Street and The Electric Company have been confirmed.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES PLANNED

The Electric Company Research Department will play a major role in a presentation on instructional television AERA convention in San Francisco, in April, 1

The Electric Company will also participate in the International Conference on Evaluation and Research, in Milton Keynes England, in April, 1976.

THE ELECTRIC COMPANY PRODUCTION

MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

From October 13 through December 19, the last half of the fifth season was taped at the studio.

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

Weekly studio production meetings and general production staff meetings relating to the taping of the show were held during this period.

DATA COLLECTION

The Production Department is continuing to help the outside study on ways in which a specific teacher's role can be programmed into the series.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES PLANNED

The last half of the fifth season will be edited in February. Writer and general staff meetings beginning on the first of February will be held to discuss the sixth season.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Sesame Street embarked upon its seventh season with curriculum and production innovations that include its first outdoor-based programs (in the Rocky Mountains), experimental programming for mentally retarded children and educational contributions to the nation's bicentennial.

The Electric Company entered its fifth season in this period and Public Affairs completed a press package and a five year historical summary of the project and distributed it to television and education editors and writers. The division also created and distributed to public television stations a set of photographs of their use in bringing the 1975-76 Electric Company season to the attention of educators, children and parents.

Public Affairs created and distributed a "photo album" describing the first location videotaping of Sesame Street, as told through the eyes of Big Bird. This featured the cast visit among Spanish-speaking Americans and Indians in New Mexico.

A press package describing the new season's experiments was also prepared and distributed to television and education editors and writers plus public broadcasting stations. Screenings were conducted for television and education writers in several cities and interviews arranged with the appropriate production and research personnel.

Public Affairs disseminated information about Sesame Street's bicentennial-related episodes linking the program to official activities of the American Issue Forum (the only nationwide treatment of bicentennial themes devoted strictly to preschoolers).

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AND FINDINGS

A major new experiment is the production and research of materials for mentally retarded children shown each week this season. Public Affairs worked with the research, production and community education divisions and the Kennedy Foundation in calling attention to this new curriculum, including distribution of a story about the experiment to specialized educational publications, distribution of a similar story in the general press package, and photography to illustrate the new curriculum.

Sesame Street's visit to New Mexico resulted in its first location interaction with Spanish-speaking Americans and American Indians. Buffy St. Marie, the Indian singer-composer, also joined the regular hosts this season and Public Affairs distributed photographs and a story about her to the general press as well as numerous Indian publications.

The description of the new experiments resulted in widespread commentary and coverage.

Public Affairs also assisted the Research Division in the graphic design and printing requirements for a test book, and began working with that unit on a newsletter that will report on research findings at CTW. It also worked with the research and advisory staff on responding to educators and journalists interested in learning more about a critical study of earlier studies of Sesame Street by the Educational Testing Service.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION SERVICES

The Community Education Services Division (CES) is charged with the responsibility of reaching out to initiate activities leading to the use of Sesame Street and The Electric Company as a supplemental resource in formal and informal settings. The following descriptions are selected highlights of CES activities during the October through December, 1975 period.

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS

Sesame Street has embarked upon experimental programming designed to teach mentally retarded youngsters. This new direction is an effort to reach the country's estimated six million mentally retarded youngsters. The target audience consists of children whose mental age approximate's that of a three to five year old. The special segments are based to a large extent on the "Families Play to Grow" program of the Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation and include physical activities with some simple cognitive skills added. The Community Education Services Division is coordinating a nationwide effort to alert parents and teachers to the many possible applications of these programs and encouraging post-viewing learning reinforcements activities.

In the western region, CES focused upon contacting the directors of special education within schools systems and utilizing them as a focal point for the distribution of material to teachers, parents and agencies concerned with mentally retarded children.

The following school and school related organizations are cooperating with CES in this effort:

Los Angeles Unified School District

Los Angeles Country Schools

Compton Public Schools

San Diego Public Schools

California State Department of Education

Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation

California State Federation of Council for Exception Children

California Association for the Retarded

Valley Instructional Television Association of Sacramento

KQED - TV of San Francisco

Honolulu School District

KCTS - TV of Seattle

Seattle Public Schools

Yakima Public Schools

Spokane Public Schools

Olympia Public Schools

Tuscon Public Schools

Las Vegas Public Schools

Through these contacts and the dissemination of material to parents, teachers and others the CES Regional Coordinator is building an audience for the experimental programming for mentally retarded children. Following this period of alerting and informing concerned individuals and organizations, the CES Coordinator will engage in a series of workshops explaining the goals of the curriculum and suggested methods of reinforcing the content of the broadcast in the post-viewing situations. The activities conducted by the CES Coordinator in the western region are illustrative of the efforts of CES staff in other areas of the country.

The Community Education Services Division in cooperation with the Universidad Boricua of Washington, D.C., an experimental post secondary institution designed to serve people of a Hispanic origin, conducted a ten week course for students, parents, teachers and others working with young Spanish speaking children. This pilot project used Sesame Street and The Electric Company to demonstrate the use of television as a supplementary educational resource, for Spanish speaking children. The curriculum included units on:

An Understanding of Television

Educational TV as a Learning Resource

Parent Involvement in Using TV as a Learning Resource

The Local Spanish Speaking Community and Early Childhood Education

Using Sesame Street and The Electric Company in the Home or in Day Care Centers

Reinforcement Activities with Children

The course was structured to provide a mix of classroom lectures, discussions and practical "hands on" experience working with children. Due to the enthusiastic response to this project, it is anticipated that the Universidad Boricua will repeat the course and conduct a similar project through its affiliate in New York.

The Community Education Services staff in cooperation with the Massachusetts Educational Television Authority initiated the development of a reading comic strip to complement the basic reading skills taught on The Electric Company. The reading comic strip will appear in the Sunday comic section of the Boston Globe for thirty consecutive weeks, beginning in the early part of December 1975. The strip is designed to motivate children to learn basic reading skills through a high interest comic strip using The Electric Company characters and a "cast of children set in Boston and surrounding locales".

The primary emphasis is upon actively involving the children; parent participation that is encouraged through a brief weekly section of teaching tips for parents.

The staff members in conjunction with the Bureau of Indian Affairs Schools serving the Choctaw tribe in Philadelphia, Mississippi developed a project utilizing Sesame Street and The Electric Company. Workshops were conducted for the pre-school staff and the K-3 staff. Both staffs have enthusiastically adopted the use of CTW productions as supplementary resources. The programs will be viewed on a daily basis by approximately 50 preschoolers and 200 K-3 students. In the K-3 classrooms space has been set aside as an Electric Company activity area. As a follow up to this project, CES is conducting exploratory discussions with the tribal chief about the use of The Electric Company as a resource for functionally illiterate adult tribe members.

Another element of the CES outreach to Native Americans, was a two day workshop conducted for Indian Education Training, Inc., in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Indian Education Training, Inc., is a non-profit organization set up to provide educational services and information to Indian parent groups, Indian educators, teachers, school administrators, and tribal organizations. The participants in workshops were trainers employed by Indian Education. The trainers provided services to the Navahoes and Pueblos in Arizona and New Mexico and other tribes in the Southwest. The objective of the workshop was to equip them with the information and skills necessary to train other groups, in the use of CTW productions as supplementary resources.

The staff members of the California office has developed a project with the State Motor Vehicle Bureau. The bureau provides child care

services for employees with preschool children. In order to broaden the educational options available to the preschoolers, CES is promoting the use of Sesame Street as a supplementary resource with the staff of the Sacramento Child Care Center. It is anticipated that this center will serve as a pilot site for the other centers on the Motor Vehicle Bureau.

The Community Education Services Division and members of the School Volunteer Service (SVS), conducted two workshops for a total of three hundred parents in New York City. The objective of the workshops was to demonstrate simple inexpensive activities that could be carried on at home, to reinforce the educational goals of CTW productions. These workshops grew out of a two day training session, conducted for SVS staff in the first quarter. The CES Regional Coordinator and national staff, as indicated in the foregoing highlights of their activities continue to be the major technical resource for CTW to reach out directly to teachers, parents and others involved in the education of preschoolers and young children in formal and informal settings.

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

During the October through December 1975 period, CES staff dissimated information about CTW at conferences and exhibits with the following agencies and institutions interested in the range of services provided by CES:

Conferences of the Association of Puerto Rican School Workers (NYC)

Action for Children's Television Fifth National Symposium on Children and Television (Atlanta, Georgia)

Conference of the North Carolina Association for the Education of Young Children (Winston Salem, North Carolina)

State Convention of the Texas Foster Parent Association (Dallas, Texas)

Conference of the Intercultural Development Research Association on the State of Education for Black Children and Youth in Texas (Dallas, Texas)

South Alabama State Fair (Montgomery, Alabama)

Governor's Conference on Education (Jackson, Mississippi)

Conference of the Alabama Federation of the Council for Exceptional Children (Montgomery, Alabama)

Convention of the Arkansas Association of Teachers (Little Rock, Ark.)

Conference of the California Federation of the Council for Exceptional Children (San Diego, California)

California Junior State Convention (Los Angeles, California)

PERSONNEL

STAFF UTILIZATION

During the period of October through December 1975, no new hires or terminations were done.

FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT

1. FEDERAL AGENCY AND ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT: Department of Health, Education & Welfare, Off. of

3. NAME AND ADDRESS OF GRANTEE ORGANIZATION:
Children's Television Workshop
One Lincoln Plaza
New York, New York 10023

4. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NO.: 13-2655731

5. GRANTEE ACCOUNT NO. OR IDENTIFYING NO.: S.S/TEC/76

6. PROJECT PERIOD (Month, Day, Year): FROM | | | TO 6 30 76

10. STATUS OF FUNDS	PROGRAMS - FUNCTIONS - ACTIVITIE (1) Sesame Street	(2) The Electric Co.	(3)	(4)
a. Total outlays previously reported	$1,744,700	$2,908.900		
b. Total program outlays this period	740,700	586,300		
c. LESS: Program income credits	-	-		
d. Net program outlays this period	740,700	586,300		
e. Total program outlays to date	2,485,400	3,495,200		
f. LESS: Non-Federal share of program outlays				
g. Total Federal share of program outlays				
h. Total unpaid obligations				
i. LESS: Non-Federal share of unpaid obligations				
j. Federal share of unpaid obligations				
k. Total Federal share of outlays and unpaid obligations				
l. Total Federal funds authorized				
m. Unobligated balance of Federal funds				

11. INDIRECT EXPENSE: a. TYPE OF RATE (Mark box)

* ☐ PROVISIONAL ☐ FINAL
☐ PREDETERMINED ☐ FIXED

b. RATE | c. BASE

d. TOTAL AMOUNT | e. FEDERAL SHARE

12. REMARKS (Attach additional sheets if necessary)

* To be determined.

NEW-A01T

OMB NO. 80-R0180

	2. FEDERAL GRANT NO. OR OTHER IDENTIFYING NO.
	Pending

6. FINAL REPORT	7. BASIS OF REPORT
☐ YES	☐ CASH
☒ NO	☒ ACCRUED EXPENDITURES

9. REPORT PERIOD (Month, Day, Year)							
FROM	10	1	75	TO	12	31	75

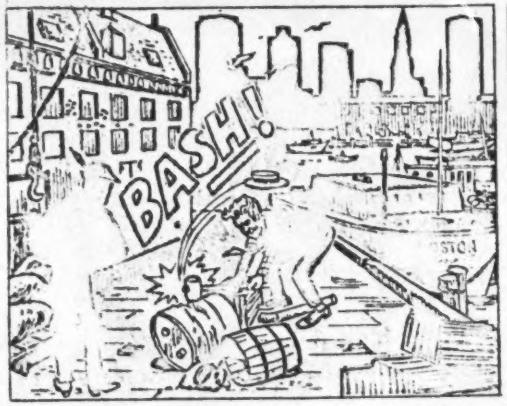
S

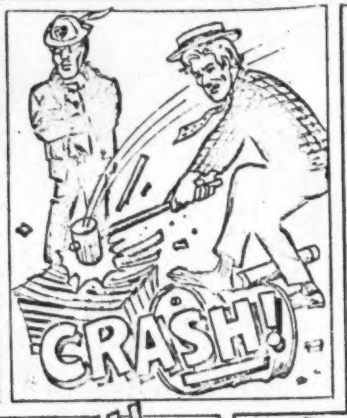
(5)	(6)	TOTAL
		$4,653,600
		-
		-
		1,327,000
		5,980,300
		580,600
		5,400,000
		-
		-
		-
		5,400,00

13. Certification - I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief this report is correct and complete and that all outlays and unpaid obligations are for the purpose set forth in the grant award documents.

NAME AND TITLE	TELEPHONE		
	AREA CODE	NUMBER	EXT.
C.E. Harnett Director of Accounting	212	595-3456	520

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL	DATE REPORT IS SUBMITTED
C.E. Harnett	1/21/76

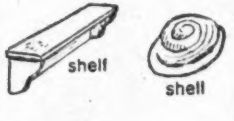


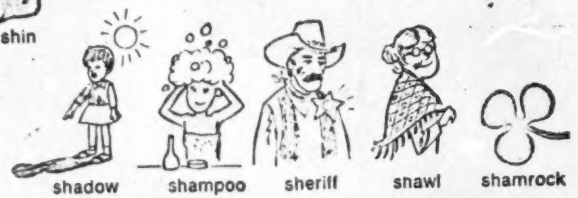


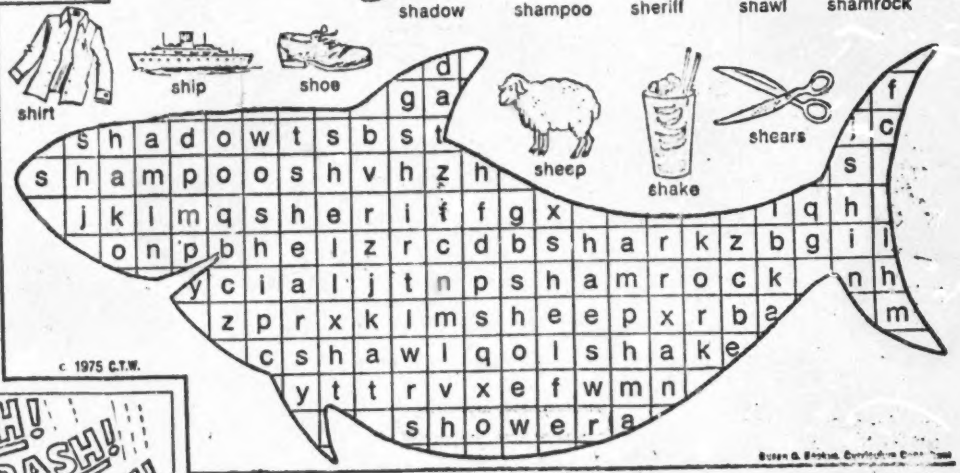
Shape Up or Ship Out!

The names of all 15 things in this puzzle begin with sh. Can you find them? (Words read across → or down ↓.) We've found shower for you.

We've hidden an extra word in the puzzle. What is it? (Hint: Look at the puzzle shape.)



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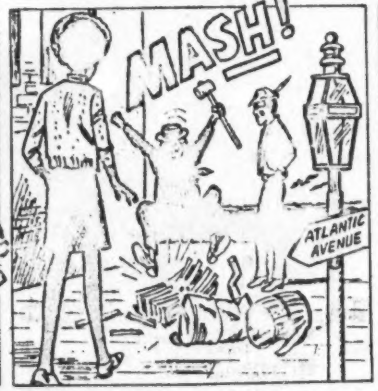

Reading Tips for Parents

A B C D E
F G H I J
K L M N O
P Q R S T
U V W X Y
Z

POTTSTOWN, PA.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1975

TV: 'Sesame Street' Takes Some New Directions

Bicentennial Themes and Visits Are Used

By JOHN J. O'CONNOR

Dodging the slings and arrows of suspicion automatically attracted by success, public television's "Sesame Street" has raised about $5-million for still another new season. The seventh season, which began yesterday, will add 130 hour-long videotaped segments to the series designed for preschool children. The programs will be broadcast weekdays, usually in both mornings and afternoons, for 26 weeks.

After getting past the alphabet and basic numbers, where does a children's series go for variety? This season "Sesame Street" ventures forth in three new directions. And the results are mixed.

One innovation, which begins today, will attempt to relate Bicentennial themes to occasional segments. A tie-in with the American Issues Forum will be used to explore nine subjects during the current year. However, tie-ins with the American Issues Forum can be tricky, as WNET/13's "Our Story" series has discovered. The "lessons" tend to be as labored and about as valuable as those comic-book drawings stuffed with not-so-hidden images and references.

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The "Sesame Street" approach is harmless enough, a sort of children's version of the musical "Of Thee I Sing." In today's episode, Big Bird runs for President, proposing to turn the White House into a Bird House, from which he can rule without fear of contradiction. But, as he is reminded by one of his constituents, "This nation is not just made up of birds." Lesson delivered.

At the end of this month, from Dec. 22 to 26, the series will leave the studio borders of Sesame Street to visit a Chicano family in the Rio Grande Valley of New Mexico. Using the real-life Romo family as the family of Luis, one of the regular series characters, the five episodes are filmed on location. Jon Stone, executive producer, believes that "by presenting children in the settings where they live, we add realism and dramatic impact to our goal of teaching about different cultures."

Perhaps, but the "Sesame Street" format also gets a healthy injection of badly needed variety. The switch to a rural setting opens the way for introducing new characters and situations. Gordon learns how to milk a cow. Big Bird make new friends in a chicken coop. The Spanish-speaking family and the American Southwest are used most attractively.

One of these shows features a trip to an Indian pueblo. The guide is the singer Buffy Sainte-Marie, who has composed several songs for the program. The trip and brief tour of Indian music and language are handled with skill and imagination. Miss Sainte-Marie will appear as a guest on other programs during this season, and "Sesame Street" is already planning to take further trips out of the studio. It should. This one works beautifully.

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The third major new element in the series this season is one on which the producers are "moving very cautiously." This is a collection of special segments, to be presented each Wednesday during the first 20 minutes of the program, aimed at children with learning disabilities. Based largely on research developed by the Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation, the segments include physical activities mixed with some simple cognitive skills.

There is no question that such efforts are laudable for television. With a target audience of youngsters whose mental ages approximate 3 to 5 years old, "Sesame Street" is attempting to reach the country's six million mentally retarded children, for whom no special TV programming has been designed so far. Using handicapped children, the segments are limited to simple exercises, with a minimum of background clutter.

Special Segments Set for the Retarded

Two problems, though, are immediately apparent. At home, such children will need the participation of a parent. And it is still difficult to anticipate how the normal viewer will react to the inclusion of the special material. Only time and the enormous research connected with any "Sesame Street" project will tell. Meantime, any work in this sensitive area demands encouragement.

DETROIT, MICH.
CHRONICLE
M. 41,685 (N)

NOV 15 1975

Experiment For 'Sesame'

A "first" on "Sesame Street", which debuts its new season on the 256 stations of the Public Broadcasting Service on Dec. 1, is experimential programming designed to teach learning-disabled youngsters whose mental ages approximate 3-to-5-year olds.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE
HOUSTON, TEXAS
D. 299,228 SUN. 363,711

NOV 22 1975

'Sesame Street' Still Children's Favorite

BY THOM SHALES

© 1975, Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service

Washington — Big Bird runs for President on a platform of "birdseed for everybody" and kisses for all babies. But when the portly yellow fowl wins the election, and learns that people expect him to solve their problems and not just go rollerskating, he is visibly shaken.

"You mean," he says, "I can't do anything I want to, even if I'm on top?"

This lesson for Presidents as well as children is included in the second episode of the seventh year of "Sesame Street."

The ascent of Bird is one of several features on Bicentennial themes added to this year's show. There will be other new elements. For the first time, the cast will leave mythical Sesame Street and hit the road. Five shows were taped in rural New Mexico and will be shown the week of Dec. 22-26.

And so we find Big Bird riding on the back of a pickup truck with Oscar the Grouch nearby in his garbage can, while everybody sings, "We're a long, long, long, long, long, long way from Sesame Street." In New Mexico they learn what an "arroyo" is and how to milk a cow.

Also new, on Wednesdays, will be special features geared to "learning-disabled" children. In addition, "outreach" learning programs built around the broadcasts are being started in two Texas prisons, where volunteer inmates will tutor children of other inmates, and in an Arkansas workshop where English will be taught to young Vietnamese refugees.

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WKAR-TV Highlights

"The Electric Company" has returned

"The Electric Company" has returned to WKAR-TV, Ch. 23, Michigan State University's public television station, Monday through Friday at 11 a.m. with a repeat at 5:30 p.m., and Saturdays at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

The return of this popular series from the Children's Television Workshop is a direct result of public contributions to viewer supported Ch. 23 through the non-profit organization, People for Public Broadcasting. During PPB's March fund-raising drive, contributors were asked to specify if they wanted their donations to go toward acquisition of this series. The question generated much support -- in both dollars and enthusiasm -- that Ch. 23 made the purchase of this program a high priority for the 1975-76 season.

Viewers familiar with the series will notice a few changes in the reading series, which is entering its fifth season on the air. There's a new Short Circus (the teen rock group), increased audience involvement and adventures and skits more adaptable to classroom use. A new character has been added — Spiderman, a comic-book super hero. He doesn't talk on the program so viewers have to read what he is saying or thinking in the balloons over his head, much the way they would read his thoughts in a comic book.

Even with these changes, the goal of the series remains the same. The major emphasis is still the teaching of basic reading skills to second through fourth graders.

THE STATE JOURNAL
LANSING, MICH.
D. 82,480 SUN. 84,541

MAY 25 1975

NAPLES, FLA.
NEWS
D. 10,502 SUN. 11,000

OCT 19 1975

TV FOR CHILDREN

The cast of **The Electric Company** is shown en route to the new season that premiered Monday of this week: (left to right) **Jim Boyd** as J. Arthur Crank; **Morgan Freeman** as Easy Reader; **Hattie Winston** as Valerie the Librarian; **Luis Avalos** as Dr. Doolots; **Rita Moreno** as Pandora the Brat; **Skip Hinnant** as Fargo North, Decoder; **Judy Graubart** as Jennifer of the Jungle; and **Danny Seagren** as Spider Man.

This is just a sample of the many characters played by the repertory cast within The Electric Company format, which uses entertainment as a vehicle for teaching important reading skills. The half-hour program, produced by the Children's Television Workshop, is seen twice each day and again on weekends on most of the 256 member stations of PBS (Public Broadcasting Service).

Locally **The Electric Company** can be seen Monday-Friday at 9:30 am and 5:30 pm and Saturday at 9 am and 11 am (10)(2)(G2)

The TV Picture

TV Editor Ron Hutchison

'Electric Company' Opens Season

The involvement of kids in the reading lessons of "The Electric Company," TV's acclaimed reading series, takes on added importance in the 1975-76 season as its teen rock group, the "Short Circus," with new members and new sounds, plays a new central role in encouraging in-school and at-home viewers to get turned on to reading.

Also to be seen in the series' fifth season, which opens today, will be some genuine grade school pupils taking part in a number of teaching sequences and a "more readable" Spider-Man netting a whole crop of new arch-villains.

The Emmy-award-winning series, produced by the Children's Television Workshop opens its season on WMUL-TV, Channel 33 and WSWR-TV, Channel 9. Most of the member stations air the half-hour program twice daily, once during school hours for classroom use and once in late afternoon for home-viewing and reinforcement.

World-wide, The Electric Company is having an increasing impact. Great Britain this year became the 17th English speaking nation to adopt the series. To the general approval of British teachers and the press, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) aired a number of Electric Company programs in an experiment for the benefit of 10 -to 16-year-old problem readers.

In the United States the series has had a measurable impact on its target audience of 7- to 10-year olds according to a two year study by the Educational Testing Service of Princeton, N.J. The second part of the study, conducted in The Electric Company's second season, revealed that many of the reading skills acquired by youngsters in their first year of viewing were still apparent a year later.

A recently reached agreement between PBS and CTW provides for the airing of The Electric Company through the 1980-81 broadcast season. According to David D. Connell, CTW vice president for production, the arrangement calls for two years of new production followed by four years of alternate repeats of these shows. Research and outreach activities related to the series will be continued through all six years and research findings at the end of that period will determine the future of the series.

Spider-Man, who debuted on the series last year and quickly became a viewer favorite, will be "more readable" in the fifth season. From the start the super-hero has only communicated through comic book-like speech and thought balloons that encourage viewers to read Spider-Man's simple sentences in order to follow his actions.

CHARLESTON W. VA.
MAIL
D. 58,000

OCT 20 1975

SHARES THOUGHTS: Justice triumphs on "The Electric Company," as Spider-Man, the popular comic book hero who now appears on the TV reading series, nets a villain named "Sandman" (Luis Avalos) and shares his results with viewers through a "thought balloon."

TIMES UNION
ALBANY, N. Y.
D. 80,048 SUN. 195,691

OCT 24 1975

JUSTICE TRIUMPHS—Spider — Man, the popular comic book hero who now appears on the TV reading series, "Electric Company," nets a villain named "Sandman" (Louis Avalos) and shares his results with viewers through a 'thought balloon.' The series in its fifth season airs in the daytime at 5:30 p.m. over WMHT.

The Mobile
Press Register
MOBILE, ALA.
SUN 91,463

JUSTICE TRIUMPHS on "The Electric Company," as Spider Man, the popular comic hero who now appears on the TV reading series, nets a villain named "Sandman" (Luis Avalos) and shares his results with viewers through a "thought balloon." His thought balloons give viewers the opportunity to follow the action for an enjoyable reading experience. In the series' fifth season prmiering Monday at 3:30 p.m. on Channel 42, the balloons will grow larger on the screen in order to give the slowest readers the chance they need to read what Spider Man, who is played by Danny Seagren, is saying.

POTTSTOWN, PA.

TV's 'Sesame Street' finds a new minstrel in Buffy St. Marie, she blends Indian rhythm with English lyrics and a level of charm

Buffy St. Marie is taking "Sesame Street" to the Indians and a prominent Indian, herself, to Sesame Street.

The versatile minstrel, armed with a mouth bow, original songs and a mission to present the "Indian reality" to a nationwide television viewing audience of young children, leads Big Bird and other Sesame Street characters to the 600-year-old Indian pueblo near Taos, N.M. this season.

Buffy plays a key role in two "firsts" for Sesame Street during 1975-76: the first creation of programs on location and the first presentation of Indian culture on the "street" portions of the show.

Buffy's Sesame Street method is at once simple and complex; she composes and sings music that combines Indian rhythm and English lyrics. "I want to get an Indian feeling," she explains, "and at the same time I still want to be understandable to all children who watch Sesame Street."

A scene: Buffy alongside a mountain stream with Sesame Street's Maria (Sonia Monzano) and a dozen Tewa Indian children. She teaches them her new composition, "I'm An Indian and I'm Real." They are clapping a Southwest Indian rhythm but the words are in English.

To Ms. St. Marie, "Indians are special and unique in many beautiful ways but are human like everyone else. So the trick is to combine the two realities on a child's level. These kids at the Taos Pueblo are real Indians and real children so they help to make it easier."

A critic once described Buffy as "an aboriginal original blessed with a rare command of the powers that communicate. Her compositions and songs for Sesame Street demonstrate that she wants to communicate."

"The problem in many places is that kids have only heard of Indians in stories, and for them to see Indians and Indian children in their own homes on television establishes very gently the Indian reality. I want to reach all children and that's why I chose to combine Indian feeling with English lyrics."

Ms. St. Marie and executive producer Stone began talking early in 1975 about how Sesame Street, which is seen by an estimated nine million youngsters, could best approach its first presentation of native American Indians. They agreed that the programming should convey a sense of feeling about Indians to non-Indian viewers that would be understood and appreciated by both groups of youngsters.

Ms. St. Marie, who devotes much of her time to correcting perjurious stereotypes about American Indians, describes her presence on Sesame Street as one effort to illustrate the uniqueness of Indians and the fact that they are human like everybody else. She says: "I'm trying to do this gap bridging which is essential to American contemporary life, to build mutual understanding on the level of charm."

She is back in a New York TV studio with her guitar, her mouth bow — and her charm. Instead of singing with Indian children in their homes, she is demonstrating Indian music and culture to the kids on Sesame Street — and playing "Buffy" as a regular guest host on the program.

She's making new friends there, too, including the Muppets. One of them, the compulsive enumerator Count von Count, helps solve the Cree number problem posed in New Mexico. The Count stopped counting at five, avoiding numbers of more than two syllables in the Cree language. So on Sesame Street this season it's nayuk, nesoo, nistoo

Larger role for youth

Special to The Times

NEW YORK — The involvement of youngsters in the reading lessons of "The Electric Company," Public TV's popular reading series, takes on added importance in the 1975-76 season as its teen rock group, "The Short Circus," with new members and new sounds, plays a key role in encouraging in-school and at-home viewers "to get turned on to reading."

Also to be seen in the fifth season, opening Monday are some genuine grade school pupils taking part in a number of teaching sequences and a "more readable" Spider-Man netting a whole crop of new arch-villians.

The Emmy-award winning series is produced by the Children's Television Workshop (CTW). Most of 256-member public stations including Chs. 24 and 2 air the half-hour program twice daily, once during school hours for classroom use and once in late afternoon for home-viewing and reinforcement.

World-wide," "The Electric Company" is having an increasing impact. Great Britain this year became the [illegible] English speaking nation to adopt the series.

The general approval of British teachers and the press, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) aired a number of "Electric Company" programs in an experiment for the benefit of 10- to 16-year-old problem readers. The experiment will be repeated next year.

In the U.S. the series has had a measurable impact on its target audience of seven- to 10-year-olds according to a two year study by the Educational Testing Service of Princeton, N.J.

The second part of the study, conducted in "The Electric Company's second season, revealed that many of the reading skills acquired by youngsters in their first year of viewing were still apparent a year later.

A recently reached agreement between Public TV network and CTW provides for the airing of "The Electric Company" through the 1980-81 broadcast season.

According to David D. Connell, CTW vice president for production, the arrangement calls for two years of new production followed by four years of alternate repeats of these shows.

Research and outreach activities related to the series will be continued through all six years and research findings at the end of that period will determine the future of the series.

"The Electric Company" research staff is evaluating all materials produced in previous seasons in order to include the most effective elements in the 260 programs created for airing during the next six years.

Spider-Man, who debuted on the series last year and quickly became a viewer favorite, will be "more readable" in the fifth season.

From the start the super-hero has only communication through comic book-like speech and thought balloons that encourage viewers to read Spider-Man's simple sentences in order to follow his actions.

In an experiment this season the balloons will expand to occupy most of the screen and become more readable and then dissolve back to the action.

"What we're doing," said Andrew B. Ferguson Jr., the series' producer, "is giving the kids at home and in the classroom every chance to get involved with reading out words and sentences. In the case of the expanding balloons the balloons block out potentially distracting elements so the viewers get a pure reading experience. The complexity of the print used is of course geared to the slow readers who are the core of our target audience.

The new "Short Circus" is like the old "Short Circus" in number only — five members — but four of the youngsters are new this year and new too is the group's central role in motivating viewers to acquire reading skills.

"Our studies have shown us," said Dr. Vivian Horner, series director of research, "that viewers can become actively involved in the program — actually work out reading elements on paper and in their heads — through participatory activities as long as we have believable kids on the screen taking part. In other words kids relate best to kids and the 'Short Circus' will reflect this in season five. They will also act as a youthful bridge between young viewers and the series' adult cast members.

"The types of material the kids will be doing," Dr. Horner continued, "will reflect recognition of the fact that the series is used extensively in the nation's elementary schools. 'The Short Circus' members will be modeling more behavior, frequently in games and other activities familiar to viewers but provided with a twist that draws them into the reading process."

"The Electric Company's" regular adult cast members include Oscar-and Tony-winner Rita Moreno, familiar to "Electric Company" views as Pandora (the brat), the movie director and the "Hey You Guys!" shouting Millie-the-Helper; Hattie Winston, who was last season in the new role of Valerie the Librarian (girl friend of Easy Reader) and who continues The Fox; Morgan Freeman, who has played the word-loving Easy Reader since the show first started (along with many other roles); and Luis Avalos, who sets modern medicine back centuries as the Dr. Doolots and horticulture back an equal time span as Pedro of "Pedro's Plant Place."

The Hartford Times
HARTFORD, CONN.
D. 123,376 SUN. 122,857

OCT 19 1975

A head start?

'Sesame Street' characters get high marks from local teachers

By ART KAUL
Messenger-Inquirer Staff

Big Bird, Cookie Monster, Kermit the Frog and the other residents of young America's most popular television neighborhood — "Sesame Street" — are receiving high marks from local teachers.

Elementary school teachers interviewed by the Messenger-Inquirer are saying that "Sesame Street," now embarked on its seventh season, may be helping youngsters get a start on learning before they arrive in the classroom.

And there are criticisms of "Sesame Street" — especially if parents use the show as a "baby sitter" and neglect dealing with the child on a personal basis to develop language and communication skills. Too much television may even hamper a child's early development, a school psychologist says.

"Many educators are giving "Sesame Street" a very high rating," says Ora Cecil Mackey, director of elementary education for the Daviess County schools.

"Many of our children come to us with language skills and a greater readiness to read," she says. "Many of the same skills are taught on "Sesame Street" which are taught in classrooms."

Doris Sublett, a first grade teacher at Whitesville Elementary School, says she's noticed that her students "seem to have a better introduction to letters and words" than earlier pupils.

"They get started off faster," she said, "and the ones that get started faster seem to do better."

A combination of media exposure and a middle-income home environment often accelerates learning, says Jean Blaine, a first grade teacher at Tamarack Elementary School.

"We just get off a lot faster and it's no problem," she says. "Before it would take four to five weeks to get them aware of why they are there. Now we get into it (learning) in the first week."

More studentis now are coming to first grade with "an awareness of letter names and sound," Mrs. Blaine says.

Several years ago, Mrs. Blaine said she had twin girls in her class who arrived in first grade able to read at the second grade level. The childrens' mother said the twins learned to read from "Electric Company," the teacher said.

Mrs. Blaine said she's confident the twins also had watched "Sesame Street." By the end of the first grade year, the twins had been introduced to third-grade level phonics and completed two third grade readers.

Those twins had an "extremely high IQ," came from an advantaged home and received attention from their parents — all factors that contributed to their academic success, Mrs. Blaine said.

Teachers are reluctant, however, to say how much of an impact "Sesame Street" has in preparing children for school, although they say they encourage parents to let their children watch "Sesame Street" and "Electric Company."

Ann Poynter, a kindergarten teacher at Cravens Elementary School, says she's noticed more awareness in students.

She says she'd ask students who the president was and often be told George Washington. "Now someone will say Mr. Ford," she said.

"I don't know if that's because of TV or people are more interested," Mrs. Poynter said.

Research studies by the highly respected Educational Testing Service to measure "Sesame's Street's" effectiveness after its first season produced these findings:

— Children who watched the program showed greater learning gains than children who didn't watch — regardless of whether they were from inner-city, suburban or rural homes or whether they were boys or girls, black or white.

— The more children watched, the greater their learning gains.

— Skills best learned were those who had received the most time and attention on the program, such as recognizing letters, words, numbers and counting.

— Three-year old children made greater gains than older children.

— Children from "disadvantaged" (low income) situations who watched frequently made gains that surpassed those of middle-class children who watched infrequently.

Another finding — and it's an important one to remember, say local teachers and school psychologists — is that those children who watched and gained most tended to have mothers who watched and discussed the programs with their children.

City schools psychologist Duane Miller said that finding doesn't surprise him because "a parent is the primary learning agent up to the year four or five. A lot more happens because a child is dependent on parents."

Parent involvement with the child when watching "Sesame Street" — or any other program — is important to a child's acquisition of verbal abilities, says Dr. John Maurelli, psychologist for the county schools.

Maurelli, a former university professor, offered some interesting — and critical — personal observations about the impact of television generally on a child's early development.

Parents should seriously consider whether the benefits of television viewing by children outweigh the deficiencies. He is concerned that parents may use such programs as "Sesame Street" as a "baby sitting device" without providing enough interaction with a child that would promote verbal development.

And, television watching should be controlled by the parents. "I do think indiscriminate use of TV is damaging to the cognitive development of children," he said.

"Generally, I feel children who are allowed to watch TV constantly are bombarded with external stimuli which cuts off internal thinking," he said.

Asked if he would recommend that parents let their children watch "Sesame Street," Maurelli said:

"My answer is, yes, let them watch "Sesame Street." The reasoning behind this is that TV plays an important part in our everyday affairs. If the kid is doing other things, watching "Sesame Street" probably won't have any detrimental effects.

However, "heavy doses" of television viewing by children without the interaction with parents may "arrest" a child's verbal communication rather than develop it, Maurelli says. "You get 3- and 4-year old preschoolers who can't speak in sentences," he said.

"My own personal bias is that if you can control it," Maurelli said, "TV is as good as a book. Intelligent people do live with it and control it. Unfortunately, those who have the least control use TV in a flight into unreality."

A specific criticism that Maurelli has of "Sesame Street" involves the "flight into unreality." "Sesame Street" doesn't handle the separation of make-believe and reality as well as other children's shows.

"The guy who handles that best is Fred Rogers," Maurelli said," because he makes a real clear distinction between make-believe and reality. That is a little more difficult to handle with "Sesame Street" because the characters take on real personalities."

Another criticism, acknowledged by the Childrens Television Workshop which produces "Sesame Street" and "Electric Company," is that there may be a backlash effect when children enter the first grade.

The criticism is that children may be bored with a classroom environment, expecting to find the flashy and flamboyant characteristics of "Sesame Street" there.

Maurelli believes the criticism "has an awful lot of validity," a viewpoint shared by Mrs. Poynter who says its true "in some situations, but the classrooms are changing."

Kindergarten and first grade classrooms aren't the stodgy places most people think they are, says Betty Burns, director of preschool programs for Owensboro schools. "We try to have all kinds of activities going on . . . let the children move around," she says.

OWENSBORO, KY.
MESSENGER INQUIRER
D. 27,300 S. 26,500

DEC 15 1975

Sesame's N.M. Visit to Focus On Hispano and Indian Cultures

Continued from page 25.

THE CHILDREN'S Television Workshop (CTW), which produces the series, is adding other innovations in the new season. It will get into the act on the Bicentennial, for instance, but in its own way.

That includes Big Bird's campaign for President, with a pledge to turn the White House into a birdhouse. There is information on how the nation functions along with the fun. This ties in with the American Issues Forum program fostering national dialogue on U.S. fundamentals.

Also new this winter will be weekly segments designed for children with learning disabilities. The show already has been used by teachers of such children, so the CTW staff decided to produce 20-minute features especially for them.

SESAME STREET can be seen this season on 253 PBS affiliates, and on commercial channels in areas without a PBS outlet. The estimated United States audience is nine million preschoolers.

Fifty foreign nations broadcast the original English version. Several others have an "Open Sesame" series — shorter segments in the native language, reflecting local culture.

Viewers at home might be surprised at the unusual uses to which the show is put. A unique project this year is at federal prisons in Fort Worth and Seagoville, Tex., where CTW field personnel helped train 57 inmates who volunteered to tutor the children of other offenders.

About 600 children have benefited from the tutoring, built around the series. And the inmate volunteers have gained experience in teaching that might be helpful in considering later career alternatives.

ANOTHER PROJECT is at Fort Chaffee, Ark., where a CTW division is working with Westark Community College to help Vietnamese refugee children learn English via Sesame Street.

In Washington, the same CTW division and the Universidad Borriqua use Sesame Street to teach Spanish-speaking students and day care-center personnel how to use television as an educational tool.

The goal there is to develop a model program that can be adapted in Spanish-speaking communities around the United States.